

Burden of Injuries among Agriculture Workers in a Rural Bangladesh- Findings from a decade long community based injury surveillance

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Burden of Injuries among Agriculture Workers in a Rural Bangladesh- Findings from a decade long community based injury surveillance

Background

About 1.3 billion workers worldwide are engaged in agricultural production which is half of the global labor force. Only 9% of all agricultural workers are from industrialized countries while 60% are in developing countries. Agriculture is the major economic activity in Bangladesh. Almost 70% of its population live in rural areas and are dependent on agriculture for livelihood. Naturally, injury mortality, morbidity and disability are common among agricultural workers of rural Bangladesh.

Objective

Identifying the circumstances and types of injuries and the socio-economic status of agricultural workers who have been victims of fatality and different injuries.

Methods

An active surveillance titled **PRECISE** was conducted between 2006 and 2010 in three *upazilas* (sub-districts) - Raiganj , Sherpur Sadar and Manohardi . It was a cross sectional study where multistage cluster sampling was applied. A pretested standard paper-based questionnaire was used to gather information.

Results

Injury mortality was the highest from road traffic accidents with rates of 17.79/100,000-population per year. Most injury illnesses were from cuts (1420/100,000-population per year). For injury mortality and morbidity, people aged 65 and above were identified as the vulnerable group with rates of 91.79/100,000 population and 5067.5/100,000 population respectively.

An estimated 30.1% of agricultural workers were injured at work. Among the fatalities, 23.5% injury-related deaths occurred from violence and animal bites directly linked to agricultural work.

More than half (58.86%) of the agricultural workers who had suffered from injury illness or died from injuries, were illiterate. After dividing their economic status in quintiles it was found that the majority belonged to the relative middle income group (3rd Quintile).

Conclusion: Agriculture sector in Bangladesh is still disorganized in character and there is an absence of a nationwide repository on agriculture-related accidents and injuries. A repository would be extremely useful for quantifying the health and safety factors and the economic consequences.

Key Words: Agricultural Worker, Injury, Bangladesh